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Viewing cable 07MANAGUA269, RIZO: PLC AND ALN UNDERESTIMATED ONE ANOTHER TO

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#07MANAGUA269**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
07MANAGUA269	2007-01-30 18:19	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Managua

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758456.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758467.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758468.aspx>
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<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3966/la-ldquo-injerencia-rdquo-de-ee-uu-en-el-2006>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-23/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2758764.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-23/Mundo/NotaPrincipal/Mundo2758753.aspx>
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<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2757239.aspx>
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<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2757244.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2746673.aspx>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3991/dra-yadira-centeno-desmiente-cable-diplomatico-eeuu>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3968/pellas-pronostico-a-eeuu-victoria-de-ortega-en-2006>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3967/barreto-era-ldquo-fuente-confiable-rdquo-para-eeuu>

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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8884
INFO RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 0932
RUMIAAA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MANAGUA 000269

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/30/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [KDEM](#) [NU](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: RIZO: PLC AND ALN UNDERESTIMATED ONE ANOTHER TO
THE BENEFIT OF ORTEGA

REF: 2005 MANAGUA 2864

Classified By: Ambassador Paul A. Trivelli. Reasons 1.4 (B,D).

11. (C) Jose Rizo, the Liberal Constitutional Party's (PLC) presidential candidate in the November 2006 race, acknowledged to PolCouns on January 23 that he had miscalculated the strength of rival Nicaraguan Liberal Alliance (ALN) candidate Eduardo Montealegre, while Montealegre had also underestimated the PLC's political machinery, name recognition, and popular "staying power" in Nicaragua's deep-rural northern areas. He lamented his "failure to convince" U.S. officials before the election that he could have reformed his party and sidelined PLC caudillo Arnoldo Aleman, but also conceded that Aleman's power sharing pact with Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) leader Daniel Ortega would probably have precluded a Rizo victory in the November 2006 election.

12. (C) Visibly sobered by Ortega's victory, Rizo warned that the new president's efforts to consolidate power auger poorly for Nicaragua. He remarked that the two estranged Liberal parties must set aside their differences for the common good. However, he acknowledged that Ortega and Aleman will do their utmost to prevent Liberal unity.

13. (C) Rizo, who is determined to continue his appeal before the Supreme Court regarding his entitlement to an alternate (suplente) seat in the National Assembly, recounted how Supreme Court Justice Martinez had recently told him that his claim is valid, but political interests stand in the way. According to Rizo, PLC caudillo Arnoldo Aleman is the political force behind the Supreme Electoral Council's (CSE) decision to disallow Rizo's right. Rizo explained that if he fails to win his seat after exhausting all legal avenues, he intends to file a complaint before the Inter-American Human Rights Commission. (Note: According to Article 133 of the Constitution, the elected incumbent president and vice president are accorded principle and alternate seats, respectively, in the legislature. The Constitution makes no mention that the resignation of the elected vice president is grounds for disqualification.)

14. (C) While conceding that Aleman continues to hold the reins of the party, Rizo asserted that discontent among the PLC's rank and file, and even among the party's traditionally obedient Assembly lawmakers, is growing. He attributed their disaffection to the party's abysmal electoral loss (in the presidential race, the PLC placed third) and the realization that Liberal disunity and the longstanding pact between

Ortega and Aleman had allowed Ortega to win the election. According to Rizo, in his numerous consultations with PLC followers since the electoral loss, they consistently call for Liberal reunification and party reform -- including ending Aleman's destructive hold over the party.

¶5. (C) Rizo agreed that the PLC and ALN should refrain from public attacks and efforts to "steal" one others' followers - actions that serve only to advantage Ortega further divide the opposition. By crafting a common legislative agenda and strategy, the two estranged parties could gradually build the confidence to form a broader political alliance, suggested PolCouns.

¶6. (C) Comment: Rizo's remorse and determination may be theoretically encouraging, but he has lost the modest political clout he once enjoyed. Nonetheless, some Assembly lawmakers owe their candidacies to Rizo and he may still exercise some influence over them. Rizo's comments also track with those of his erstwhile running mate, Jose Antonio Alvarado, who recently told DCM that he and Rizo had been "duped" ("embarcado") by Aleman and that he was now fully convinced that Aleman had deliberately worked against them to deliver the presidency to Ortega. While trying to minimize his own substantial role in the campaign attacks and fabrications against ALN candidate Eduardo Montealegre, Alvarado also insisted that it was time for the two Liberal parties to bury the hatchet and work together. He indicated there was significant disenchantment among the PLC faithful and professed his commitment to continue loosening Aleman's stranglehold on the party. Alvarado's political capital has fallen even further than Rizo's, however, and it is unlikely he will have much influence in either PLC or ALN circles in the political serpent-dance ahead.

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